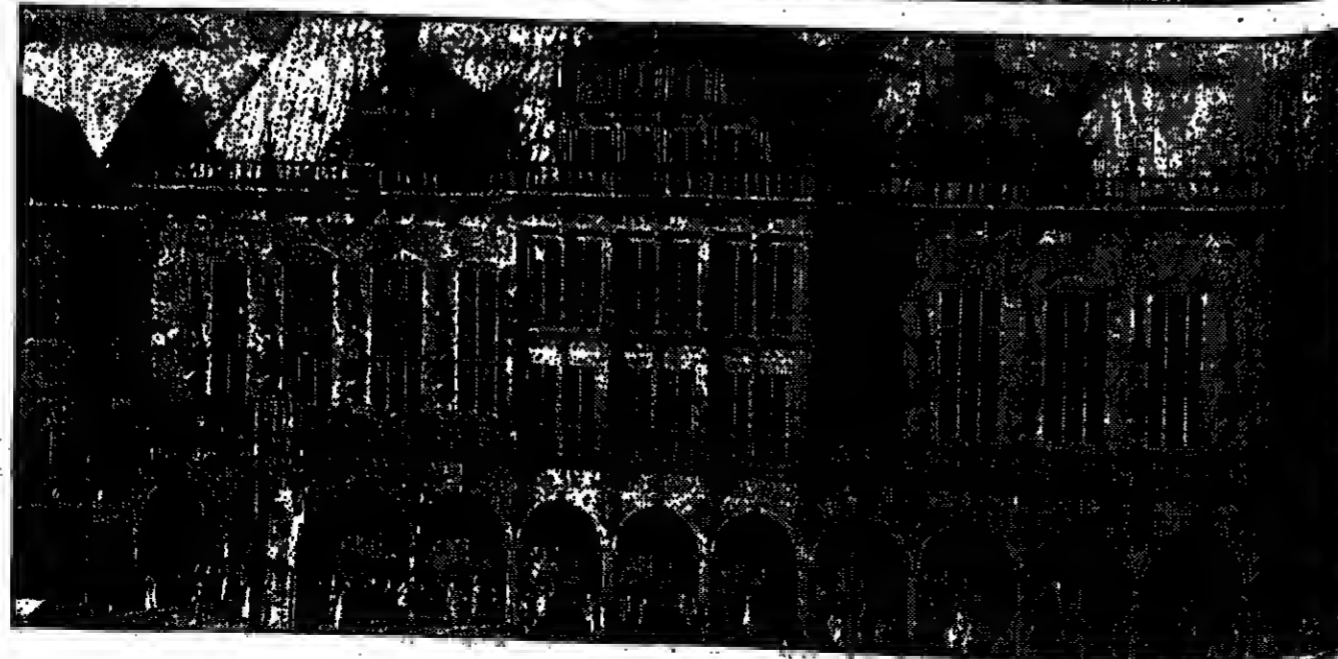
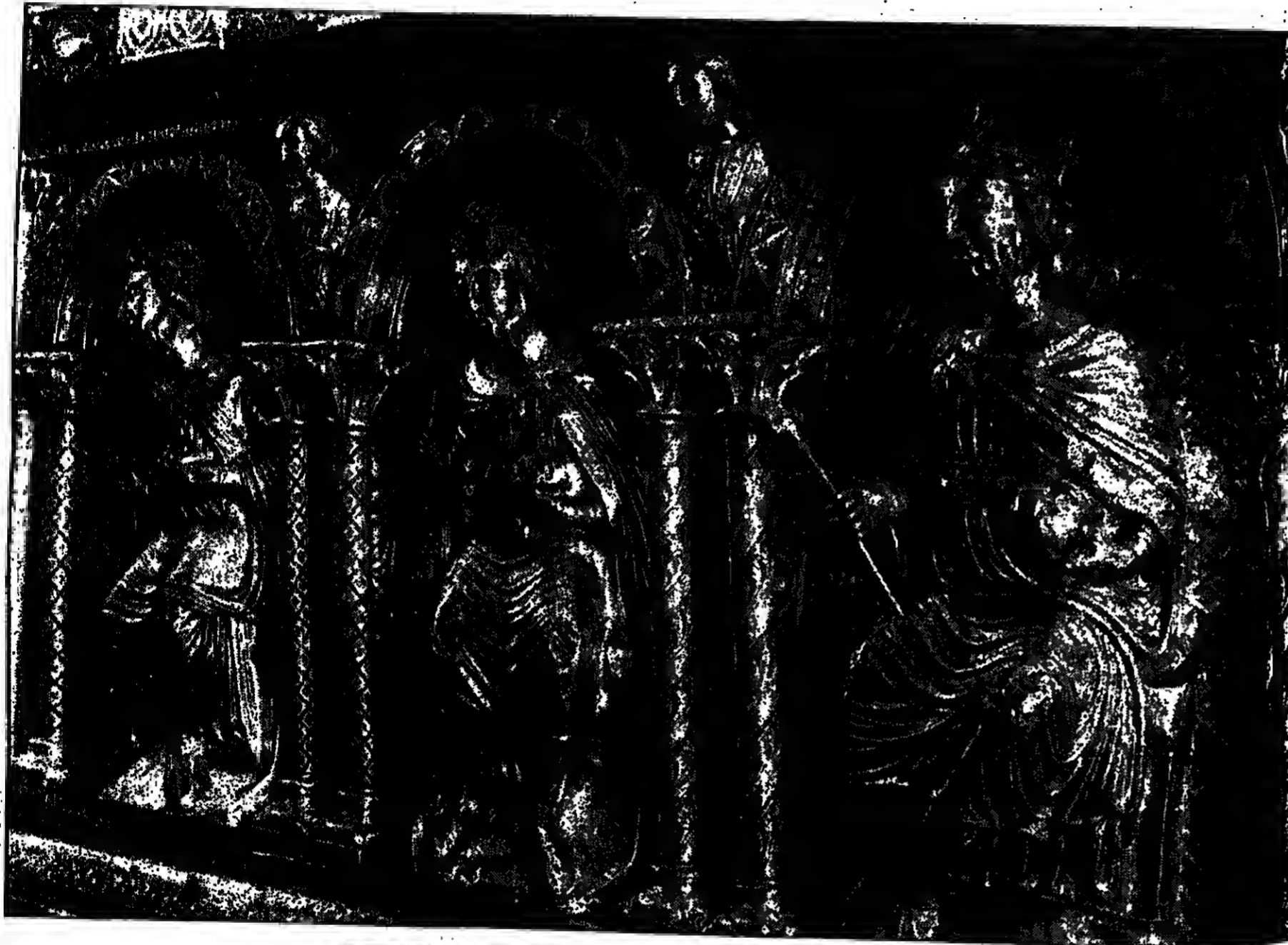


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The German Tribune

A WEEKLY REVIEW OF THE GERMAN PRESS

Hamburg, 10 April 1977
Sixteenth Year - No. 782 - By air

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President Sadat on a working visit to Bonn



Egyptian President Anwar Sadat, left, and President Welter Scheel arriving at Scheel's residence. President Sadat was in Bonn on 31 March on the first stop of a week-long tour which took him to Bonn, Paris and Washington.

(Photos: dpa)



President Sadat's 31 March visit to Bonn was a working visit without the red carpet treatment. It was almost a year to the day since the Egyptian leader paid Bonn his first official visit.

Egypt's relations with the West have steadily improved since President Sadat ousted his predecessor's pro-Soviet advisers in May 1971.

Yet Egypt's finest hour when, in the wake of the October 1973 Yom Kippur War, President Sadat was a principal intermediary in the Middle East conflict and grew increasingly important in Western eyes, is fast receding into the dim and distant past. Does the West really need President Sadat any longer?

This query is made without the slightest intention of being cynical. In foreign affairs diplomatic routine is frequently at loggerheads with common sense.

Since the Kissinger era European di-

no doubt serve to boost his personal prestige, but this does not necessarily mean that the West should try to ensure that the Egyptian leader is chosen for the part.

Configurations are quick to change in the Middle East. Only a few weeks ago Bonn Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher harboured hopes of a change of heart on the Palestinians' part, expressly mentioning the fact to Arab diplomats.

The tensely-awaited conference of the Palestinian National Council, which ended in Cairo on 20 March, dashed such hopes with a vengeance. The PLO seems determined to fight on until final victory.

The Egyptian government has since intimated in no uncertain terms that it does not consider itself the Palestinians' wet-nurse. At present President Sadat is hardly in a position to bring much political pressure to bear on the Palestine Liberation Organisation, in which extremists have the upper hand.

So at the moment the Egyptian leader hardly seems shortlisted for the role of intermediary in further contacts with the Palestinians. But Egypt nonetheless remains a focal point of Western diplomats in the Middle East for two other reasons.

For years to come the industrialised countries will rely on substantial oil imports from the Arab world, particularly Saudi Arabia.

No one in Europe knows much about Saudi Arabia, but Arab politicians appreciate how, potentially unstable the kingdom is. Were Anwar Sadat, the level-headed statesman, to be replaced in Cairo by a man in Colonel Gaddafi's mould, the Saudi throne would be in

jeopardy, and so would the sum total of oil supplies to the West.

So this country would do well to lend the Egyptian economy generous support, and President Sadat remains an important political partner from Bonn's point of view too.

In January Egypt's pro-Moscow Communists tried to oust him by means of a mass uprising. Cairo's experiments in multi-party democracy were to be superseded by a Marxist dictatorship along East European lines.

Fortunately the coup failed and President Sadat is now firmly back in control.

Six years ago he singlehandedly cast off the trammels of the late President Nasser's power apparatus, entirely with-

out outside assistance and by means of a political tour de force lasting several years.

For some time this turn of events proved difficult to anticipate even in Cairo itself. Musa Sabri, an Egyptian journalist who is one of the President's close associates, recently edited a volume of important source documents that shed light on the way in which President Sadat accomplished this feat.

Yet even without going into the finer details it is appreciated in the West that President Sadat is in favour of parliamentary freedom.

In recent years Western Europe has done much to nurture the tender shoots of democracy in countries such as Greece, Portugal and Spain. The fate of democracy in Egypt cannot be immaterial to Europe either.

The process of democratisation in Egypt may not measure up to much by European yardsticks but open criticism can now be levelled in the Egyptian parliament at Ministers, the Premier and even the head of State, and that is saying something.

Not for more than a quarter of a century has there been so much freedom in the country.

President Sadat is a man who can take, and indeed relishes, a frank exchange of views. Recent meetings between the Bonn and Cairo Foreign Ministers were marked by too many trite phrases. There was too much resounding verbiage and too little meat.

President Sadat's visit to Bonn will have represented a welcome opportunity of continuing where he and Helmut Schmidt left off a year ago.

The Middle East will be back on the foreign affairs agenda this year as ever, not only in Cairo, but also in Washington, Moscow and Bonn. *Harald Voicke*

(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 31 March 1977)

IN THIS ISSUE

EUROPE	Page 2
Challenge to Parliamentary system a major item at Anglo-German talks	
HOME AFFAIRS	Page 4
CDU takes over the SPD stronghold of Frankfurt	
ECONOMICS	Page 6
New alignment of parties forecast within the Snake	
INSURANCE	Page 8
Complaints against insurance firms bring call for an ombudsman	
LITERATURE	Page 10
Till Eulenspiegel not just a harmless joker, says researcher	
MEDICINE	Page 13
High blood pressure, the killer with few symptoms	

plonists have grown accustomed to taking President Sadat seriously as an opposite number, but the Egyptian leader will no longer be able to give a policy of gradual improvements in the Middle East situation that extra nudge needed for it to gain general acceptance.

The very idea is now past history. Syria and Jordan are no longer interested. Neither are the Israelis.

If President Sadat were to resume the status of a key diplomatic figure in any new round of Middle East talks it would



US State Secretary Vance in Bonn

US Secretary of State Cyrus Vance, left, pictured during talks in Bonn with Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, centre, and Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher on the outcome of the latest SALT II negotiations between the US and the Soviet Union over strategic arms curbs. Vance was on a tour of the main West European capitals.

■ INSURANCE

Complaints against insurance firms bring call for an ombudsman

Fifty thousand million deutschmarks a year ring through the cash registers and flutter serenely through to the bank accounts of private insurance companies.

Last year thirty million claims were handled and 20,000 complaints were lodged with the government agency in Berlin that functions as a court of appeal.

This agency normally only hits the headlines when companies apply for an increase in premiums for compulsory policies, such as third-party cover for motor vehicles.

Only one in four of the 20,000 complaints was upheld by the Berlin agency. In motor insurance, for instance, proceedings are instituted in only one per cent of cases. In other insurance sectors litigation is even more infrequent.

These are statistics the insurance companies produce year after year in order to substantiate their claim that relations between companies and policy-holders are all sweetness and light.

But this is only half the story. It neatly begs the issue of dissatisfied policy-holders who are simple not sure of their legal position and throw in the towel rather than take the company to court; they do so because of the risk of crippling legal costs.

What is more, claimants often settle out of court, making do with a bird in the hand even though they may be entitled to two in the bush.

Insurance companies' relations with their clients are doubtless no better or no worse than in other trades, professions or businesses, but they are not as untroubled as the statistics customarily quoted might appear to indicate.

For the layman insurance is unusually complicated because it provides a service that is invisible. That is why there has been much public discussion of late about improving consumer safeguards in the insurance sector.

As a general rule public debates of this kind culminate in a demand for the establishment of fresh committees, commissions or bodies with whom complaints may be lodged and who will, it is hoped, perform a better service than their predecessors.

So it came as no surprise to learn that the latest idea is the appointment of an insurance ombudsman, an impartial official whose job it would be to follow up complaints, suggest solutions to shortcomings and generally provide advice.

Holland and Switzerland already have insurance ombudsmen.

Before going into the pros and cons it is worth noting the complaint facilities that insurance policy-holders already have at their disposal.

First, complaints may be lodged with the company itself. It goes without saying that if you are dissatisfied with the treatment you have received your first letter of complaint is going to be sent to the insurance company's head office.

If the complaint is dealt with by the same assessor as beforehand, the likelihood of a more favourable settlement is, of course, slender, which is why a number of companies have set up complaints departments of their own — undoubtedly a good idea.

The insurance agent's influence ought

not to be underrated either. If the client so wishes he can intervene and will often be able to bring about a more satisfactory solution. Successful, leading agents can frequently work wonders.

Viewed in this light there is obviously a difference between one agent and another. It is by no means necessarily six of one and half a dozen of the other.

In a number of sectors the terms of the policy expressly provide for certain bones of contention being submitted to independent tribunals.

In a dispute concerning indemnification in respect of an accident claim appeals may be submitted to a medical panel, for instance.

As far as the usual householder's policy, the claimant may also apply to an independent tribunal to assess the damage covered by the terms of the policy.

The various insurance sectors also have national bodies and organisations. They are not entitled to impose a settlement when a dispute between company and policy-holder arises, but they can and do mediate.

Since associations of this kind are keen to maintain their members' reputations for fair trading they will usually act on claims that are of general interest.

In recent years the number of complaints lodged with the government agency in Berlin has increased by leaps and bounds — probably because an increasing number of people are aware of its existence.

It is not, however, a court of appeal in the sense that it is entitled to impose a

settlement. Often it will reply to the effect that it cannot be of assistance and the policy-holder will have to take his case to court.

Yet a letter of complaint to Berlin is always a good idea. The agency sets in a supervisory capacity to the insurance industry as a whole and companies are none too keen on being reported to Berlin more often than can be helped.

To some extent complaints rebound on the Berlin agency itself, which is responsible for terms of contract that are considered either incomprehensible or unfair.

The terms of policies are submitted to Berlin for approval, so the agency may find itself at the receiving end of complaints that a condition or turn of phrase it has deemed satisfactory makes no sense or is unfair to the policy-holder. So there clearly are occasions when even the Berlin agency, which may reasonably be considered to be on the consumer's side, feels overtaxed and would prefer to refer complaints to independent arbitration.

If the worst comes to the worst, claimants have no option but to take their cases to court, but there are good reasons why many prefer not to do so. Litigation can cost a small fortune, and although you can take out insurance cover against the cost of court cases, cases of this kind are not covered except when the point at issue is a straightforward claim for damages.

What is more, few members of the legal profession can lay claim to a tho-

rough grounding in the more out-of-the-ordinary forms of insurance business, and those there are usually work for the insurance companies themselves.

Besides, both companies and their industrial organisations employ legal staff, which means that they are generally at an advantage over the other side when cases come up before the courts.

Mind you, consumer associations have increasingly concerned themselves with insurance matters of late. They too provide referral services.

Then too, there are the media. An increasing number of policy-holders write to their local newspaper or to the broadcasting authorities in anticipation of assistance.

Frequently this assistance takes the form of information and the recommendation to address a complaint to the competent body. People are often aware of the opportunities that are already open to them.

So is there any point in appointing an ombudsman as yet another institution for handling complaints? Probably not. He would just be yet another link in the chain without affording substantial relief.

Policy-holders would merely be even more confused than they already are. What is more, ombudsmen cost money and are as liable to festoon themselves with red tape as anyone else in a similar position.

If an ombudsman is to be appointed, he ought surely to amalgamate the existing facilities. He should exclusively service the sector extending from company complaints departments at one end to litigation at the other.

He would, however, definitely need to be both independent and impartial and to enjoy the confidence of all concerned. Otherwise his appointment would be a waste of time.

Arno Sammler
(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 29 March 1977)

Business as usual is very much the motto of Frau Dr Inge Lore Bähre, who has headed the government's watchdog agency supervising the activities of the banking profession since 1 October 1975.

From her desk at Reichspostufer, Berlin, she is keen to emphasise continually as the byword of her agency's activities. In her inaugural address she stated that laxity would not be condoned, but she is at pains to note that the phrase she used had in fact been borrowed from one of her predecessors.

On closer acquaintance there can be little doubt that she is the right person for the job. She is a chain smoker, but conveys the impression of self-assurance and imperturbability.

She is unmoved by the suggestion that as a woman she tends to be particularly strict. Stressing continuity she points out that she has been with the agency ever since it was established in 1962.

As vice-president since 1971 and president since 1975 she has never once been accused of being "just like a woman" in the way she goes about her work.

Frau Bähre has been responsible for surveillance of the activities of overseas investment funds. Out of a total of 200 funds applying for permission to operate in the Federal Republic she has given only 35 the go-ahead.

She also testified to pluck and foresight in her handling of a spectacular bank crash resulting in the cessation of activities by the Pfälz-Kreditbank.

Of late she has paid greater attention to the activities of public-sector institutions such as local authority savings

Inge Lore Bähre heads watchdog agency for banks



(Photo: dpa)

banks. Directors have been caught selling stocks and shares illegally abroad, fined by the tax authorities and subsequently banned from the banking profession by Frau Bähre.

Frau Bähre is a pains to emphasise that such drastic action is seldom required and that a career ban is only imposed after due consideration in each and every case.

Inge Lore Bähre, who was born in Insterburg, East Prussia, in 1920, does not

approve of differences in management selection procedures between private and public-sector banking.

But when it comes to senior management appointments by a Landesbank or savings bank her Berlin watchdog agency is only consulted once the politicians have had their say.

Candidates are vetted and nominated by state and local authority governments or officials and then referred to Berlin for consideration of the nominee's suitability as a banker.

Frau Bähre is unhappy with this state of affairs. Improvements could well be effected here and there, she feels. Supervisory boards of Landesbanken and savings banks are for the most part political appointees. She wishes they would demonstrate a greater sense of responsibility in management appointments.

Appointments in this sector are frequently made with party-political parrot in mind. This is not the yardstick by which a banker should be measured and Frau Bähre wishes her agency were not handed the can when political nominees do not measure up to the requirements of the position.

Inge Lore Bähre is confident that peace and quiet will return to the banking world before long. "I am not a clairvoyant, mind you," she adds.

Should it do so, much of the credit will be due to her. Frau Bähre feels that minimum reserve requirements, as they now stand, are satisfactory, as are the opportunities of intervention placed at her agency's disposal by recent legislation.

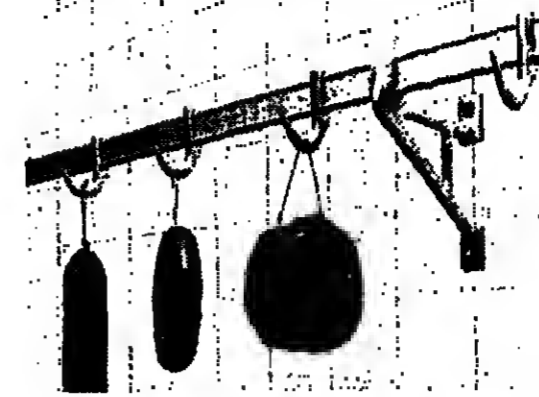
She has been associated with banking in one form or another all her working

Continued on page 13

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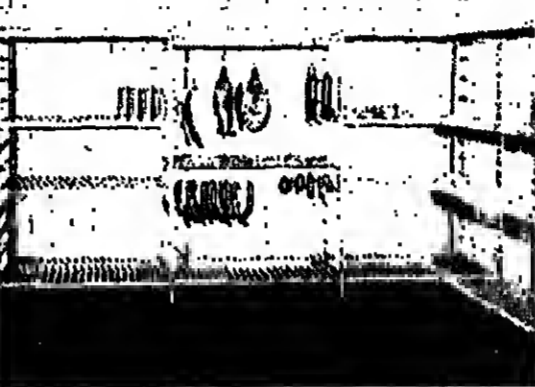
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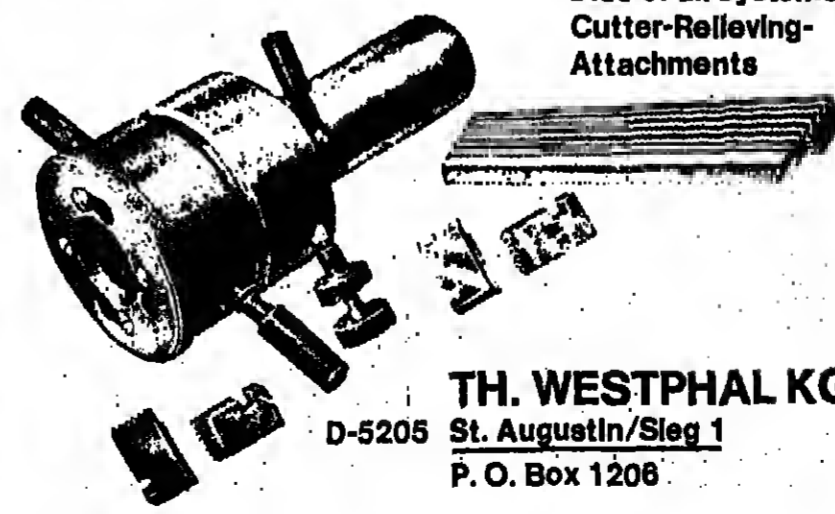
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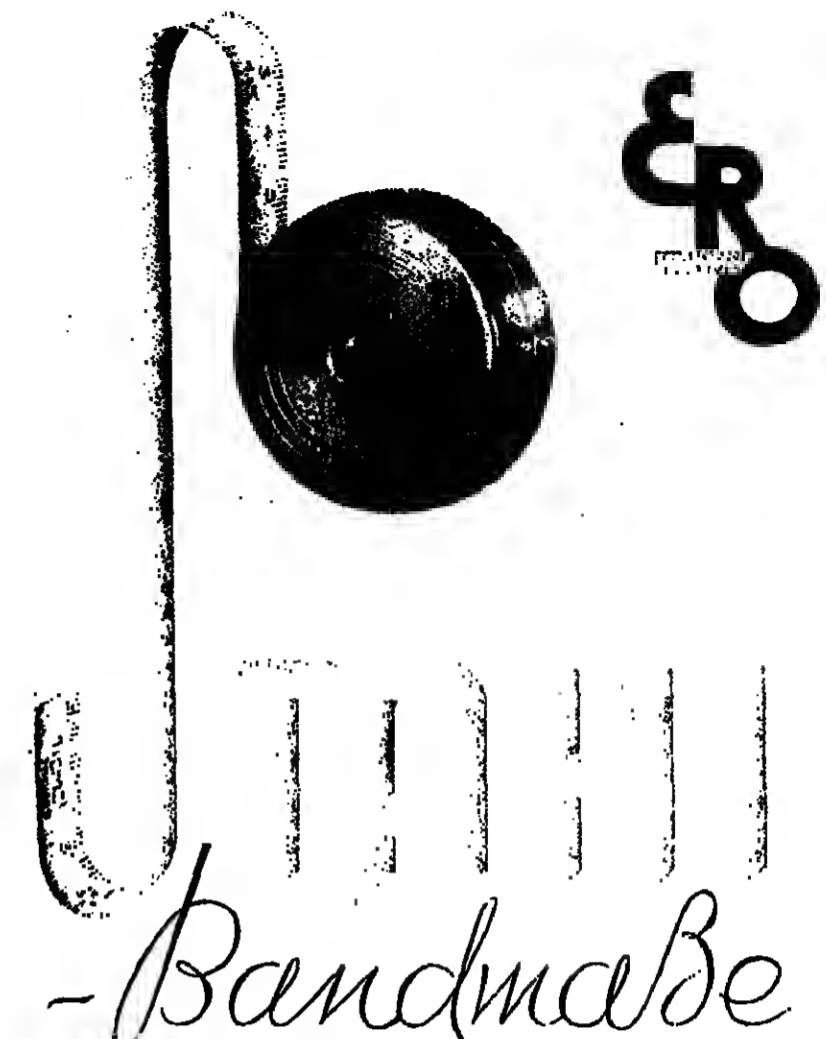
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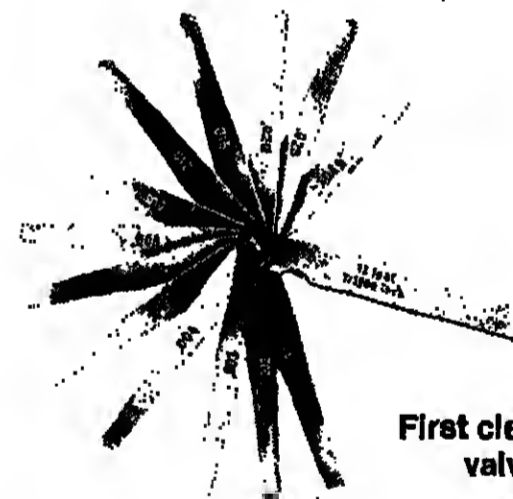


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LITERATURE

Till Eulenspiegel not just a harmless joker, says researcher

Till Eulenspiegel was no harmless jester, but a symbol of the devil. This surprising interpretation has been put forward by Bernd Ulrich Hucker, research assistant for history at the Teachers College in Münster.

Herr Hucker has thus lent new impetus to the research into the main character of the Eulenspiegel story, dating back to the early 16th century which has meanwhile been translated into 15 languages.

Hucker caused a sensation two years ago when, in the catalogue of a major Hamburg book auction, he stumbled upon the oldest Eulenspiegel edition dating back to 1510/11. He managed to purchase this edition, which had been considered lost, relatively cheaply.

Stimulated by his sensational find, Hucker went to work analysing the text and arrived at an interpretation contrary to all previous theories about the popular hero.

According to Herr Hucker, Eulenspiegel was neither a harmless jester nor an anti-authoritarian hero and protestor on behalf of the peasants, but he symbolised the devil whose misdeeds were recorded by the book's author Hermann Bote (about 1460, to 1520), a customs scribe, as a "deterrent example".

The 100 Till Eulenspiegel episodes depict the jester as the prototype of an evil person who - frequently without any motivation - harms his fellow man, who cheats, teases, mocks, defies and, in the truest sense of the word, besmirches him.

The episodes conveyed by Bote are studded with quotations from the Bible and other religious works of the time. They have been inserted in such a manner that - in conjunction with Eulenspiegel's evil deeds - they can only be viewed as "perversion of the Christian way of life and, in some instances, as blasphemy".

In the course of his life Eulenspiegel withdraws more and more from the Christian orbit and indeed acquires traits of the Antichrist.

Hucker arrives at the conclusion that the customs scribe Hermann Bote, a man of genuine lay piety, conceived his hero as a "negative figure" and a warning example similar to Doctor Faustus as well as a deterrent for good Christians.

This intention does not immediately become obvious from the introduction which was written in the year 1500. But in characterising his Eulenspiegel episodes Bote makes use of a terminology with which his contemporaries were familiar from another work, the serve epic Reinke de Vos (1498).

There the terminology is used to depict a depraved, diabolic person, and the individual stories are intended as edifying tracts.

It is of secondary importance in this connection that Hucker believes himself to be in a position to prove that Reinke de Vos was also written by Hermann Bote. What matters is the parallel to Reinke (meaning the fox).

The fox, in this case representative of sinful man, passes through various stations of salvation but is no longer in a

position to obtain absolution through repentance.

The sinner Eulenspiegel, too, is incapable of genuine repentance, although all three branches of Christendom try to convert him. Their efforts prove unavailing. In the end the representatives of monkhood, priesthood and laity bid him "Go to Hell!" In doing so they are unaware of how aptly they have spoken.

There are attempts at converting Eulenspiegel in as many episodes - and Hucker considers this figure by no means coincidental since it provides the key to the structure of the book, which is governed by a symbolism of numbers.

It is divided into groups of ten, five, eight and seven episodes, while groups of three form important stations.

Double episodes create transitions and climaxes. The whole thing begins with the famous triple baptism of Till Eulenspiegel and ends with the still mysterious three burial episodes of the jester.

The final episodes, with their gruesome scenes, clearly depict Till Eulenspiegel as an adversary of the Christian Order. Just as throughout his life all sacraments failed to have any effect on him, after his death, too, he books at a sacramental funeral by the Church - successfully so.

In depicting his episodes, Hermann Bote availed himself of popular superstitions according to which events such as the breaking of the ropes, the toppling of the bier and the interference in the funeral by sows have demonical significance.

Eulenspiegel is not only a jester, in other words an evil and criminal person in terms of the 16th century, but "the jester of jesters" - the embodiment of evil. He apes Divine functions and pretends to foretell the future, to perform miracles and to be able to heal the sick. But whenever it comes to the crunch all that transpires is an enormous hoax. Everybody who relies on him can be sure of being tricked. In Lübeck Eulenspiegel is supposed to be hanged. When his time comes "he is quiet, speaking not a word". According to Hucker, this is a conspicuous reference to the biblical stance of Jesus Christ in his agony. But as opposed to Jesus, Eulenspiegel was neither humble nor despairing in the face of death. He had the people prove their devotion to him by making them kiss that part of his anatomy where, according to mediaeval superstition, witches kissed the devil, namely



Till Eulenspiegel's statue in Mölln, where he is said to have been buried. (Photo: Interpress)

the backside. This gains him his freedom for under no circumstance is he willing to sacrifice himself for the people.

The anti-hero Eulenspiegel was thus equipped with attributes of the Antichrist - all the way to parallels to the life of Jesus, but always in a negative or ridiculous form. He undergoes a development and mysteriously adapts himself to new situations. As a result Bernd Ulrich Hucker views the Eulenspiegel book as an early form of the prose novel and speaks of a type of "negative development novel".

But Till Eulenspiegel is neither a novel about a jester, nor is it a mere collection of ribald episodes. In a formal sense, the book is not so much dominated by the natural phases childhood, youth and old age - to which literary researchers hitherto attributed too much importance - as by a number of eschatological stations extending from baptism to funeral.

The fact that in passing through these stations the jester surprises time and again by his foxy ruses has a comical effect on the reader of today.

In the 17th and 18th centuries he was still considered a ne'er-do-well and when the book was recommended as reading matter this was only done as a warning not to become like Till Eulenspiegel.

It is as yet impossible to foretell the consequences of the new Eulenspiegel interpretation. In all likelihood the question as to the historical figure of Till Eulenspiegel will have to be reconsidered.

If his gravestone in Mölln near Lübeck is anything to go by "Till Eulenspiegel" died in 1350 and was buried in the St Nikolai cemetery there.

But Hucker is rather sceptical as to the actual historical existence of the jester. Says he: "Perhaps we have been led astray - and not only with regard to the authorship of the book." Norbert Frie (Die Welt, 23 March 1977)

Samizdat research centre opens in Munich

Following three years of preparation, the International Samizdat Research Centre and Archives, Munich, has now begun its work.

The Centre is located near Munich University with which it will cooperate closely. It has been financed by the Volkswagen Foundation and other private foundations in the Federal Republic, Switzerland and the United States.

Samizdat is a Russian word meaning as much as self-publication as it is based on the former Soviet censure "Gosizdat" (State publishing house) but it is also reminiscent of "Samogol" (moonshine liquor).

Samizdat publications are manufactured under the counter in the Soviet Union. They are usually duplicated typewriter and - especially in the case of books - by photographic means.

One of the first Samizdat jokes, which is still being told to foreigners, is more or less as follows:

"What are you typing there, Comrade?"

"War and Peace by Count Leo Tolstoy for my granddaughter."

"But that's required reading, and you can buy it in any bookstore."

"Sure, but my granddaughter reads only Samizdat."

Researchers from 12 countries are involved in the establishment of the Samizdat Research Centre. They hail from Britain, the United States, Holland, the Federal Republic of Germany, France, Italy, Norway, Israel and Japan.

The German founding members are Professors Dietrich Loeber of the University of Kiel and Nikolaus Lobkowicz of Munich University. The first director of the Munich Research Centre is Professor Martin Dewhurst, an expert in Russian and Soviet literature, of Glasgow University. Professor Dewhurst has been appointed a guest lecturer at Munich University.

The Research Centre was dominated in Munich primarily because Munich is a great many researchers on Eastern Europe, among them members of the Institute for USSR Studies, which was set up by the Federal Republic, and which published Who's Who in the USSR.

Another reason for siting the Centre in Munich was that Radio Liberty and Radio Free Europe, which are located in that city, have the greatest collection of Soviet Samizdats. Moreover, Radio Free Europe also owns the largest collection of Samizdat texts from the non-Soviet countries of Eastern Europe.

Radio Liberty usually broadcasts around the clock in the languages of the Soviet Union, while Radio Free Europe - also broadcasting around the clock - addresses itself to the smaller media notions of the Warsaw Pact and CEEcon.

The Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty incorporation stated that it was to place its Samizdat collection at the disposal of the Samizdat Research Centre, free of charge.

The American lawyer Alvin Karp played a major role in the Centre and has been appointed its legal adviser. In the period from 1976 he compiled a 22-volume series of Radio Liberty for eight bloc research centres in the States and in Western Europe. (Die Welt, 24 March 1977)

CINEMA

Hitler epic by film-maker Hans Jürgen Syberberg

Adolf Hitler's is still a name that gives rise to heated emotions. Take Marlene Dietrich, for instance. Marlene of the fabled legs, heroine of the thirties' film epic The Blue Angel, recently announced through her French lawyers that she intended applying for a court injunction against the title and final scene of the film Adolf and Marlene.

Ulli Lommel, director of the film that promised to be the subject of litigation, promptly announced a retaka of a number of scenes starring Adolf, played by Kurt Raab, and Marlene, played by Margit Carstensen.

Lommel is by no means the only film-maker currently working on the life and times of the Führer. Joachim C. Fest, author of a standard biography of Hitler, is currently engaged in putting the finishing touches to a 1.2-million-deutschmark, ninety-minute documentary entitled Hitler - A Career. He has scoured the globe for two years in search of material for inclusion in his compilation.

Last but not least, Munich film-maker Hans Jürgen Syberberg has just completed twenty days of shooting at Bavaria's Geiselgasteig studios. Syberberg's film, entitled Hitler in us - A Film from Germany, Land of Progress, will cost a reported one million deutschmarks.

Syberberg, who was a little fatigued after a hard day's shooting when interviewed by Kölnischer Stadt-Anzeiger, insisted that his title was definitely intended to be programmatic.

The film will, however, be very much his (Syberberg's) own work both intellectually and aesthetically, referring to such a wide range of Western tradition to such an extent that he was rather slanted at the idea of Hitler as a tag.

He would much prefer Hitler in his film not to assume the proportions of "an inordinately omnipotent figure in terms of intellectual history." He does, on the other hand, take Hitler seriously and regards him (protracted pause while he tries to find the right epithet) as the "grave-digger of the West."

Hans Jürgen Syberberg was born in Pomerania in 1935, grew up in the GDR and holds a PhD in Germanic studies. He now lives in Munich where he is a freelance film producer and director.

He made his first mark with documentaries such as Fritz Kortner rehearses 'Kabale und Liebe' (1955) and Sex Business, Made in Pasing (1969), in which he took the lid off sex film-maker Alota Brummer.

In 1968 he directed Scenabea, an adaptation of Tolstoy's short story 'How Much Land Does a Man Need?'. In 1970 he followed it with a film version of Heinrich von Kleist's novella San Domingo.

Yet Syberberg failed to break through to a wider public either with these early works or with subsequent output. Maybe it is because his work has always made considerable intellectual demands on the viewer.

He first hit on the idea of a German trilogy during work on Ludwig - Regulus for a Virgin King in 1972. Hitler and Karl May, the late nineteenth century writer of adventure books for boys, are the other two. Syberberg made a three-hour film on Karl May in 1974 which was recently shown on ZDF.

Channel Two of Federal Republic TV.

Both Adolf Hitler and Karl May put in an appearance in his film about the allegedly insane mid nineteenth century King of Bavaria - as a nightmare seen by the hapless Ludwig in a Venus Grotto reminiscent of Wagner's Tannhäuser.

Syberberg himself terms this reference "somewhat naive". With the passage of time he has come to see a closer link between Ludwig II, Karl May and Adolf Hitler. The composer Richard Wagner undeniably influenced all three.

So to be exact it will be a German trilogy, not a trilogy, part four being the five-hour documentary Winifred Wagner and the Tale of Hans Wahnfried (1975), which is to be screened in full by Westdeutscher Rundfunk during the Easter period.

Hitler in us is also envisaged as a five-hour blockbuster co-produced by Federal Republic TV, the BBC and France's ORTF with financial backing from the Bonn Ministry of the Interior and the Film Promotion Institute.

It will previously be given cinema showings, but Hans Jürgen Syberberg does not expect the film to be a moneyspinner. He feels it will prove an outsider, with too many "negative thresholds" placed in the viewer's way for it to earn a fortune at the box office.

Syberberg's Hitler film will deal with the phenomenon of the man in 23 episodes, but "the phenomenon", he adds, "is his supporters, are ourselves. I feel we are proving faithful executors of Hitler's legacy, and this the film is intended to show."

Unlike Stalin, say, but very much like Ludwig II and Karl May, Syberberg argues, Hitler was the result of a full-scale popular movement, and in such cases it is always hard to decide whether the man made the movement or vice-versa.

But this media dependence from both above down and below up is, the Munich film-maker continues, "doubtless what makes both the man and his repercussions unique."

Syberberg's film is intended to be neither a historic reconstruction nor the tale of an anti-hero. In order to impress upon the viewer that "each one of us possesses some characteristic or other of Hitler, who himself was a man of many parts," the entire cast play the part of Hitler in addition to their own.

"Hitler," Syberberg claims, "will be an extremely fractured figure, in no way reduced to the status of a great actor."

In aesthetic terms Syberberg's latest film recalls his Virgin King. Shots are projected on to a gigantic backdrop and the cast act out their parts in front of this background "in a world entirely of their own, in their own dimension of rooms and strange forms that take on the shape of reality within the spectator."

The Third Reich made great play with symbolism derived from heraldry, uniforms and rhetoric. Everything in Syber-



Hans Jürgen Syberberg. (Photo: dpa)

berg's film is similarly intended to be of powerful symbolic effect.

"At this point my concept of Bonn coincides with that of the Nazis," he says, "so that I in my way do them justice - but I turn them upside down. It will be a Nazi world but turned topsy-turvy and reduced to the absurd by means of aesthetic stratagems."

We shall not know until this autumn whether or not Hans Jürgen Syberberg has done his own expectations justice, but he will shortly be showing a few clips from his footage in Düsseldorf, afterwards answering questions in a debate entitled Kitsch and Tragic Consequence.

Rolf Thieser

(Kölnischer Stadt-Anzeiger, 23 March 1977)

Herbert Achternbusch both directs and stars in his latest film



Herbert Achternbusch. (Photo: Erich Schmidt)

This logic is a far cry from Murnau's The Last Man, in which George is unable to cope with the loss of his uniform, or Zuckmayer's Captain from Köpenick, in which the hero dons the mantle of an Army officer in order to cut through red tape in pursuit of what he considers to be his rights.

In Achternbusch's Bierkampf the uniform proves the wearer's undoing. Yet Achternbusch's latest film fails to come up with the memorable sequences of last year's Die Atlantikschwimmer, which was a visionary masterpiece of the absurd about advertising and the individual.

There may be much to be said in defence of Bierkampf but it does not seem to match Die Atlantikschwimmer in either its radical approach or its beauty of detail.

At times Bierkampf marks time and provocative behaviour by the hero masquerading as a policeman (scenes improvised in a real-life beer tent) seem somewhat vague and tend to fall flat. Achternbusch evidently experienced difficulty in arranging his material. He relied heavily on the atmosphere of a beer tent proving absurd in itself, which it did not.

When he chose to lend a hand wonderful, albeit exaggerated, sequences resulted, but Achternbusch's reality and that of the beer tent never really found a common denominator, not even in contradiction.

Yet Herbert Achternbusch's periodic flashes of genius nonetheless render his tragicomedy so undeniably superior to recent cinematic output in this country that Bierkampf, despite its shortcomings, remains a work of cinematic art that is well worth seeing. Eckhardt Schmidt. (Deutsche Zeitung, 25 March 1977)

Japan 1976

EDUCATION

Homework a burden for both child and parents, say teachers

Among the many problems of our society there is one which educationalists and experts in family affairs have so far largely ignored.

This problem involves the inclusion of the parents in the schools' performance requirements which have lately given rise to widespread criticism.

In other words, it seems that the schools can only maintain the standards of performance required of them by enlisting the active support of parents.

Thus, aware of their impotence vis-a-vis the school as a distributor of socio opportunities, most parents resignedly permit themselves to be pressed into this tutor role because they must get their children through school, come hell or high water.

As a result, the lung march through the various stations of our modern certificate factories leads to parents having to relinquish their own interests.

The whole thing goes under the label of homework, and the schools act as if the majority of students could handle this work without outside help.

Unfortunately this whole system is, as Herr Zifreund put it, an illusion, because the entire setup of semi-finished products would collapse in practice if it were not for the mothers who have become the slaves of our schools.

And yet, if polls are anything to go by, 95 per cent of parents and teachers consider homework "useful" or "very useful", notwithstanding the meanwhile generally recognised harmful effects of our performance-orientated educational system.

This utilitarian way of thinking to some extent explains why parents are prepared to submit to the demands placed on them with regard to helping out with homework on top of

the many other stresses to which they are exposed.

But a major problem is the parents' inability to understand educational innovations such as New Math and "total reading" to which they are unaccustomed from their own school days and which they therefore have to learn from scratch.

And what about equal opportunity which our school system is supposed to provide and which can certainly not be provided by such methods, since children whose parents are unable to play the role of tutor are clearly at a disadvantage.

Thus, aware of their impotence vis-a-vis the school as a distributor of socio opportunities, most parents resignedly permit themselves to be pressed into this tutor role because they must get their children through school, come hell or high water.

As a result, the lung march through the various stations of our modern certificate factories leads to parents having to relinquish their own interests. It also leads to a loss of faith, love and confidence on the part of the children - as indicated by reports of doctors, psychologists and educationalists - and frequently ends in phobias, psychiatric syndromes and nicotins among schoolchildren.

Many of these children fall prey to these conditions. The growing number of suicides among students, triggered by failure at school, is only the tip of a gigantic iceberg of psychological disturbances created by excessive performance requirements on the part of parents and the schools.

In his book *Umgang mit der Schule* (How to Handle School), Horst Speichert recommends a prophylactic concept as first aid for parents confronted with crisis situation. Says Herr Speichert: "The help which children need must not consist in pressure, but in support against the demands of the school."

This means, above all, emotional support. If children - due to their differing leaning abilities - are exposed to discouraging disqualification processes from the very beginning it can cause lasting damage to the child's self-esteem, and it is then up to the parents to reassure their children that they are loved, wanted and appreciated at home for what

they are and not for their performance at school.

Only this can enable the children to face the next day at school and the competition this entails with the necessary self-confidence.

But it is this very attitude which many parents find so difficult to adopt. Instead of acting as their children's protectors and absorbing some of the school pressures, they frequently add to these pressures - usually with the best of intentions - by punishments such as withdrawal of play privileges, TV viewing time, pocket money and, in many instances, by physical punishment and the withholding of affection.

A great many children must buy their parents' affection with good marks.

In the name of a supposedly "better future", all this leads to a school-family relationship which makes the present intolerable for the child.

Says a secondary school teacher: "I have frequently discussed with my colleagues whether we should abolish homework altogether or perhaps give homework in a manner that would be fun for the children. But the subject of homework has become something of a holy cow, and no one dares to touch upon it."

The number of those who dread milk this cow - if only tentatively - on its pasture of empirical experiments is very small indeed.

There have been a mere four studies on the subject of homework made in the Federal Republic during the past twenty-five years - and even these disappeared in the flood of more than 500 articles on educational matters published every month.

But this has probably suited the proponents of the drill method because these four studies would have destroyed the myth of the educational effect of obligatory copying, repetition and learning by heart.

There are perfectly practicable ways out of the homework dilemma. But the parents would have to insist that homework consist only of work which has been thoroughly explained at school and therefore does not have to be explained again by mother or father.

Until parents take such a stand, says Professor Hellmuth Diwald of Erlangen - himself the father of two children - homework will remain the daily Stations of the Cross for parents.

Says Professor Diwald: "The demands of our school system have yoked the parents to the vehicle of their school objective. As a result, the parental home will remain the nation's auxiliary school."

E. Schirnbeck (Dauische Zeitung, 25 March 1977)

Stricter kerb drill urged for young children

To the edge of the pavement and further, should be the guiding principle for children of pre-school age on the street - be they alone or with their parents.

The edge of the sidewalk, beyond which lurks the danger of automobiles, motorbikes and bicycles, should define the limits of a child's freedom of movement until it has learned to meander.

This is the objective of the German Traffic Safety Council which, in cooperation with a West German TV network has evolved a new five-part children's series entitled "Doll - Children in Traffic" which is to be broadcast on Sat afternoon from 17 April to 5 May.

Children are unpredictable in their actions and tend to prove their courage by actions which are frequently fatal. Last alone some 60,000 children under the age of 15 were involved in traffic accidents, of which 1,150 were fatal.

Children of pre-school age are particularly prone to accidents. It is therefore of paramount importance, says the German Traffic Safety Council, for parents to provide an example.

Observations prove that adults are frequently anything but exemplary in their behaviour. A particularly frequent mistake made by adults is to cross a street against a red traffic light while children patiently wait for the light to change to green.

The only admonishment parents give to children is usually just "watch out for the traffic". This, says the German Traffic Safety Council, is not enough for the very young ones do not even know exactly what to watch out for.

The psychologists Maria Limber and Rudolf Glinther established that only one in three four to five-year-olds know how to cross a street at a normal pace. Most children just dash carelessly through the traffic.

Small children cannot see what is going on beyond a car. And three-year-olds have a hard time coming to a stop when running, nor can they distinguish from which direction a car-horn signal has come. Their concentration does not extend beyond 15 seconds.

Professor Gerhard Stöcker of Würzburg has evolved a time plan for traffic education, since more than half of all parents begin to teach their children too late - usually when they are four.

Professor Stöcker recommends that traffic education begin at the age of three, when the child should be told that it may not step off the sidewalk and explained that it must stop when it hears a car horn being sounded. A four-year old should be told to use its scooter or tricycle only on the pavement.

But once children go to school they should attain a certain degree of independence in traffic, following careful instruction by the parents. Too much concern about the child can prove harmful.

Studies show that children who have been over-protected by their parents, who, until their second or third year, have been taken to school, are much more in jeopardy than children who have been less protected, are more independent and understand traffic signals.

Rolf Henkel (Kölnischer Stadt-Anzeiger, 18 March 1977)

MEDICINE

High blood pressure, the killer with few symptoms

High blood pressure is much more widespread than generally assumed. Some 40 per cent of deaths in the Federal Republic of Germany can, in varying degrees, be attributed to this disorder.

If the ailment is recognised and treated in time it can be remedied, and many heart and circulatory ailments with fatal complications such as heart attacks and strokes can be prevented.

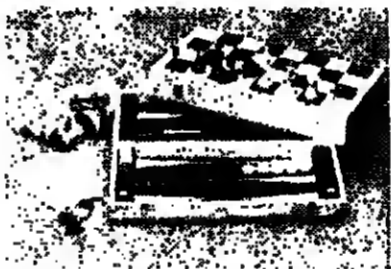
Also, the early diagnosis of high blood pressure is hampered by the fact that - as a rule - the dangerous disease causes no physical complaints that would induce a patient to see a doctor. As a result, locating the risk factor high blood pressure is one of the most important tasks of preventive medicine.

A study recently presented by the *Basische Anilin- und Soda-Fabrik AG* (BASF) on the frequency of high blood pressure among the working population was aimed primarily at locating people suffering from this ailment and inducing them to see their physician.

The study also wanted to track down changes in heart functions resulting from hypertension by means of electrocardiograms. Moreover, the scientists who worked on the study wanted to trace links between hypertension and other risk factors for the heart and the circulatory system by means of laboratory tests.

Some 37,000 staff members of BASF

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But once children go to school they should attain a certain degree of independence in traffic, following careful instruction by the parents.

BOHEMIA

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blood pressure of former smokers was only minimally higher than normal.

According to Professor Wagner of the German Cancer Research Centre in Heidelberg, this must not lead to the fallacious conclusion that smoking prevents hypertension. In all likelihood there are other risk factors which play an important role. Thus for instance non-smokers are frequently more overweight than smokers, and elderly cigar smokers frequently have a higher cholesterol level.

Particularly startling was the observation that smokers more frequently find blood in their urine than non-smokers. According to Professor Wagner "this is of considerable interest with regard to the discussion about a possible link between smoking and cancer of the bladder."

Konrad Müller-Christiansen (Hannoversche Allgemeine, 25 March 1977)

Continued from page 8

life. During the war years in Berlin she was in trusteeship, having studied management economics.

She sets great store by personal contact with bankers, but work for the most part means paperwork, particularly the vetting of monthly reports submitted by the various banks.

She took a PhD in Göttingen in 1948 with a thesis on Stages in the Direction of a Definition of the Nature of Money. Until 1962 she worked in Hanover, mainly in the banking department of the Finance Ministry.

Frau Billre usually works well into the evening, but she still manages to find time for her hobbies, which include cooking and embroidering East Prussian bridal attire.

Since taking over as head of the Berlin agency she has been busy completing two bridal carpets. One is in regular use in a church near Hanover where her daughter-in-law is a clergywoman.

Gerold Osterloh (Hannoversche Allgemeine, 26 March 1977)

Complete middle ear transplants prove a success

Professor Christian Betow, Berlin, is still the only surgeon capable of transplanting a preserved middle ear in toto.

He carried out his first transplant of this organ in 1959. Meanwhile, he has succeeded in restoring hearing without mechanical aid - in other words, a hearing aid - to 780 patients.

A transplant of the middle ear is indicated when, following surgery to remove that part of the ear, as frequently has to be done as the result of an infection, replacement becomes necessary. But the operation can also be carried out in cases of certain hereditary malformations, when it can restore full hearing ability to the patient.

The organs to be transplanted consist of parts of the eardrum, the hammer, the anvil and the stirrups.

The transplant organs must be removed within 24 hours following death and preserved in a special solution at a temperature of four degrees centigrade. One week later they can be released for the operation.

Transplants of parts of the middle ear are carried out all over the world today. While many organs of the middle ear can be implanted, the stirrups are usually replaced by a simple wire loop. In this manner hearing can be restored virtually completely, although success is not as convincing as in cases where a natural stirrup has been transplanted.

This operation can now be carried out by the method developed by Professor Betow, whereby the middle ear is transplanted as a whole.

But such an operation can only be successful if the inner ear is still operational. Moreover, the so called reserve of the inner ear provides the absolute limit for the extent to which hearing can be restored.

In most of the cases operated on by Professor Betow it was possible to achieve an improvement of between 20 and 30 decibels.

Most impressive is the case of a woman patient who, prior to the operation, was unable to hear sounds of less than 70 decibels. Following the operation she was able to understand whispers spoken at a distance of 30 centimeters from her ear.

The transplant surgery of the middle ear is always carried out under local anaesthetic. The organ to be transplanted is attached by means of gelatine which dissolves after a while or can be sucked away later.

In the first few days after the operation the patient is treated with antibiotics and cortisone in order to prevent rejection of the new organ. As a rule, he can be discharged from hospital after a week.

The new middle ear takes about four to six weeks to graft itself into position. Hearing is usually restored after six to twelve months.

A number of important advantages speak in favour of transplants. As opposed to a hearing aid, the surgery can restore full hearing. Furthermore, it prevents atrophy of the reserve of the inner ear, which virtually always occurs where mechanical hearing aids are used.

Konrad Müller-Christiansen (Frankfurter Rundschau, 23 March 1977)

Handwritten note in Arabic script: "لا بد من التعليم"

OUR WORLD

Children's villages offer the abandoned a new family



School holidays are just about to begin in Worpsswede, near Bremen. Children at the SOS children's village are looking forward to a rest from the trials and tribulations of learning.

In a way the holidays will also make life easier for the matrons who each look after a "family" of children. During term time children of various ages can be home from school at any time between half past eleven and two, clamouring for lunch and parched with thirst.

During the holidays Matron Christiane Tetzlaff of House No. 6 can be reasonably sure that her children will turn up at regular hours for nourishment.

Her children are Lars, aged eight, Frank, aged twelve, Rita, aged thirteen, and Norbert, aged fourteen, in pleasurable anticipation of the Easter holidays they have just finished lunch and are working out how they plan to spend the afternoon.

Christiane Tetzlaff, betraying not the slightest sign of nerves, invites the visitors into the peace and quiet of her own comfortable room with its view of a garden full of the harbingers of spring.

"You need good nerves - the best - to make the grade as a house matron here at the children's village," Frau Tetzlaff says.

She is not the sort who views life through rose-tinted spectacles or is given to exaggerate the good points and conveniently forget the bad. Anyone who fancies her chances as a children's matron, she says, will need to be strictly down-to-earth. There is no such thing as a world in which children are invariably well-behaved.

Christiane Tetzlaff may not describe her work in glowing, glorious colour, but she is clearly keenly convinced that she is doing a good job.

Including her current four she has been and continues to be a mother to fourteen young people.

Frau Tetzlaff is a nurse by profession and started work at her first children's village in the Black Forest in 1960. She "mothered" nine children there before moving to Worpsswede twelve years ago.

Her ambition in life has been to help other people as directly as possible. She concedes that motherhood is more than a nine-to-five job but claims that she would not have it any other way.

It can be hard and unrelenting work, keeping her busy round the clock, and although she and her children live like a normal family, additional problems do arise.

Only one child in twenty is an orphan. Most come from broken homes and need to be rehabilitated with infinite patience and care. Children are sent here in the first place on the recommendation of the local authority.

Christiane Tetzlaff is firmly convinced that the educational principles of the children's village are sound but admits that there may be advantages to be derived from placing children with fos-

ter-parents. "It depends from one instance to another," she says.

Matrons at the various children's villages are certainly kept on their toes. They attend refresher courses and seminars whenever the opportunity arises in order to keep abreast of the latest developments in education theory and child care.

Whenever Frau Tetzlaff goes off on a weekend's course a standby is at the ready to look after her four children in House No. 6.

The toughest problem you face in her line of work, she reckons, is that of retaining a personality of your own and not allowing yourself to be snowed under by the avalanche of work and the multitude of problems encountered by the children.

"It is far easier to intervene when you retain your own individuality and remain in a position to articulate wishes and demands of your own," Frau Tetzlaff adds. But she sounds a little doubtful, as though life in practice is slightly more demanding.

Whenever possible she tries to keep the "family" together. They either all play games around the family table, or stories are read and other ways and means sought of resisting the temptation to switch on the TV set.

Outdoor activities are also provided. The village itself has two ponies and a redskin encampment. Matron Tetzlaff likes to see her children make friends with children from outside the village.

This makes obvious sense: the more children they know outside their im-



Matron Christiane Tetzlaff with her children (Photo: SOS-Kinderdorf)

mediate circle, the less the SOS children will find that life centres around their own community.

Therapy and social work are both vital parts of the children's village. Berthold Dunkel, a young psychologist, not only provides individual and group therapy for the children; he also holds regular meetings of matrons to review problems and prospects. No one is left to his or her own devices.

Berthold Dunkel outlines the many ways there are of establishing a relationship with youngsters - by means of educational leisure activities such as sailing, metal- and woodwork and other hobbies, for instance. They all combine both instruction and therapy, not to mention keeping the children busy.

Psychologist Dunkel has nothing but the highest praise for the tireless matrons. He knows only too well how many enthusiastic volunteers turn up

and how many fail to make the grade in a punishing training course.

Within the conventional confines of aid to young people the SOS children's villages stand out as an uncommon, effective organisation. They rescue children from the isolation of life in a children's home and provide them with security and stability at a time when the number of children in local authorities is on the increase and the number of foster-parents on the decline.

Rehabilitation of a child deprived of family is a complicated and educationally demanding process. Staff at the 59 children's villages are both responsive and experienced.

What is more, they are not dogmatic and would be the first to agree that their organisation is only one of a number of ways of helping parentless children, as one way does not preclude the other - foster-parents, for instance.

(Dremer Nachrichten, 26 March 1977)

'Refuge' idea was launched 25 years ago

one of the most rewarding jobs there can possibly be.

Käte Greinwald is one of the women who run the Kinderdorf. She used to be a maid but, on reaching the conclusion, at the age of thirty-five, that she was not going to get married, she applied for a job as children's village matron.

That was seven years ago and she has never regretted the decision for a moment. She is as fond of her six children as if they were her own and they call her "Mummy" so naturally that there cannot be any doubt whatever that Käte Greinwald and her children really are a family.

The children themselves grow up feeling very much brother and sister, as experience over the past twenty years has proven.

Frau Greinwald's neighbours are all Kinderdorf matrons of long standing who have brought up between fifteen and twenty boys and girls over the years. "Grown-up" children regularly revisit the village and their own new brothers and sisters.

Some are now married with children of their own. Entire families revisit the village and pay their respects to a Kinderdorf matron who is now a "grandmother."

It is not difficult to divine what has made Hermann Gmeiner's idea such a success. His children's villages imbue the children with a feeling of not being alone in the world. Kinderdorf kids know a home of their own where they are always welcome.

Not even the best-run conventional children's home is in a position to provide such a sense of security which repels children from broken homes so badly need to gain the self-confidence that ought to be a child's birthright.

Specialists have since confirmed what Hermann Gmeiner sensed intuitively a quarter of a century ago. Children, especially small children, need a special relationship with an adult if they are to come into their own.

They also need experience of everyday life. At the children's village meals are not served in a canteen and clothes are not handled by a laundry. Matrons cook for her own "children" and have to go shopping and make do with her own money like any other housewife and mother.

SOS children do not attend an institutional school either; they go to the local primary or secondary school. Children must be given every encouragement to develop whatever talents they can call their own. Kinderdorf specialises in maintaining.

The SOS children's villages have an example that is gaining increasing currency all over the world.

(Kleber Nachrichten, 19 March 1977)

SPORT

Football's Grand Old Man Sepp Herberger turns 80

Sepp Herberger, probably this country's most popular sporting figure, turned slightly on 28 March. Herberger captained and coached the national soccer team for 28 years. He has been the subject of rama of commentary in his time and congratulations have poured in to mark his eightieth birthday. Virtually everyone in Germany remembers Sepp Herberger as the coach who guided his squad to World Cup honours at Bern, Switzerland, in 1954, as a soccer genius, an unswerving mastermind and friend and a past master at simple but effective football training.

again Sepp Herberger was reckoned to have a psychological knack. His squad admitted without hesitation that he was an unparalleled leader of men, as he so often proved in man-to-man pep talks.

Players capped during Herberger's tenure unquestioningly accepted every word he said, no matter how trivial it seemed. And Sepp's basic tenets sounded simple enough: "The ball is round," "each game lasts ninety minutes," "the next opponent is always the toughest" and "after the game means before the game."

Simple and straightforward was the way Herberger liked to appear, and only Eva, the woman who has been his wife for the past 55 years, felt able to smile now and again, but only from the distance, as it were, because she never still counted a single international game.

"A bank director doesn't take his wife to work with him either," Sepp explained. So home life seemed to be run along traditional, patriarchal lines too. In sport Herberger was certainly always a stickler for discipline.

He came top of his degree class in 1930 at Berlin Academy of Physical Education and invariably expected both players and the many coaches he trained to be orderly and disciplined.

He always demanded the utmost both from himself and from others, but he also always seemed to have a sixth sense for what was feasible.

When he did so, on 7 June 1964, he had been Reich and Federal chief coach for 28 years. He had been awarded every distinction association football has to offer, not to mention the Grand Cross of the Federal Order of Merit.

His teams had come first, fourth and fifth respectively in the World Cup tournaments in Switzerland in 1954, Sweden in 1958 and Chile in 1962.

When success or failure were at stake the Boss as he was known, was not a man to compromise, still less to succumb to sentiment. In Chile he replaced goalie Hans Tilkowski by his understudy Wolfgang Fabrian in mid-tournament without so much as a by-your-leave.

Eight years previously, in Switzerland, Berni Klödt likewise learnt to his cost that Herberger was no respecter of persons where the team was concerned.

After two great games against Turkey, won 4-1 and 7-2 respectively, Klödt, who played outside-right for Schalke, had to step down for Helmut Rahn. Rahn, Herberger was convinced, would prove even more devastating.

In the event he was proved right. Rahn scored the crucial goals. Once

Sepp Herberger

(Photo: Wlbrid Wlloss)

But in the 1938 World Cup tournament in France he was overruled. Herberger wanted to enter virtually the complete Breslau eleven - the first team with which he made his name.

The Reichssportführer had other ideas, however. He wanted to see a Greater German team selected, so Herberger was obliged to combine the German and Austrian teams. The result was elimination in the first round of the competition.

When the war was over Sepp Herberger was appointed Federal chief coach with full powers. He was back in office as an absolute monarch.

Yet matters were somehow different after the World Cup win in Bern. Coach Sepp Herberger, captain Fritz Walter and the team were bowled over by a wave of sympathy.

After nine bitter post-war years the 3-2 defeat of Hungary in Bern was more than a mere victory on the field of play. Any number of people expressed their gratitude for what was hailed as the Split of Spiez, where the squad had held a pre-tournament training camp. Team spirit and comradeship still counted for something, an entire country seemed to conclude.

This is perhaps why World Cup victory in 1954 counted for so much more than the Munich win twenty years later. "The first World Cup was a sensation, especially as we had been banned from international soccer for eight long years," Sepp Herberger recalls. "This second win," he adds, "was nearly according to schedule."

As a first-rate midfield player with Wsldhof, Mannheim and Tennis Borussia Berlin Herberger himself was capped three times, against Finland, Italy and Holland. He once clashed with the expenses code and was banned temporarily, but is neither money-hungry nor resentful of others' earnings.

In 1954 players were paid a 300 deutschmark allowance; in 1974 they received a 70,000-deutschmarks bonus. Times change, he says with a shrug, but will not accept this as an excuse for just any behaviour.

"Under my aegis there would have been no pre-tournament bargaining for higher bonuses," Herberger declares. Horst Eckel, one of the Beme team, is convinced that "Sepp Herberger would be a great trainer even in this day and age."

Who can tell? Conjecture is mere theory, and Sepp Herberger is a man with a practical bent. He certainly does not need to argue the toss. He could hardly be more popular than he is already.

(Münchner Merkur, 16 March 1977)

Grand Prix drivers ban Nürburgring circuit

This year's Formula One Federal Republic Grand Prix will be held not at Nürburgring, but at Hockenheim, between Mannheim and Heidelberg. Former world champion racing driver Niki Lauda of Austria, who was marked for life at last year's Grand Prix, inspected the 22.835-kilometre Nürburgring track in conjunction with fellow-driver John Watson and concluded that the eighteen-point safety requirements laid down by the Grand Prix Drivers Association had only been met in three instances. On behalf of his fellow-drivers he announced that the Nürburgring circuit was out of the running as far as they were concerned, this season.

Mountains will literally need moving if the Nürburgring Grand Prix circuit is to survive after the verdict given by ex-world champion Niki Lauda of Austria on behalf of his fellow Grand Prix drivers.

The fifty-year-old Nürburgring course, dubbed the most beautiful in the world, badly needs a thoroughgoing road safety facelift that will cost roughly forty million deutschmarks.

"Unless politicians in Bonn and Mainz take swift action, the Nürburgring circuit will from part and parcel of racing history in a very few years' time," a spokesman for Automobilclub von Deutschland commented in Frankfurt.

"Before long the Nürburgring will only be suitable for minor national events or cycle races."

Valentation by politicians is seen as the main reason why this state of affairs has come about in the first place. "Blame must be laid in equal measure at the doors of the Rhineland-Palatinate state government in Mainz and of the Federal government in Bonn, which has yet to say a good word about motor racing even though this country is the foremost car-owning nation in Europe."

Should politicians decide against improvements to the Nürburgring, this country will be left with only one Grand Prix circuit, Hockenheim, whereas neighbouring France still boasts eight.

Even Hockenheim has its shortcomings. It was only given a provisional go-ahead as a Formula One venue this season because crash barriers still need conversion.

(Frankfurter Neue Presse, 25 March 1977)

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